



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 11 May 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
11 MAY 1968

1. Czechoslovakia

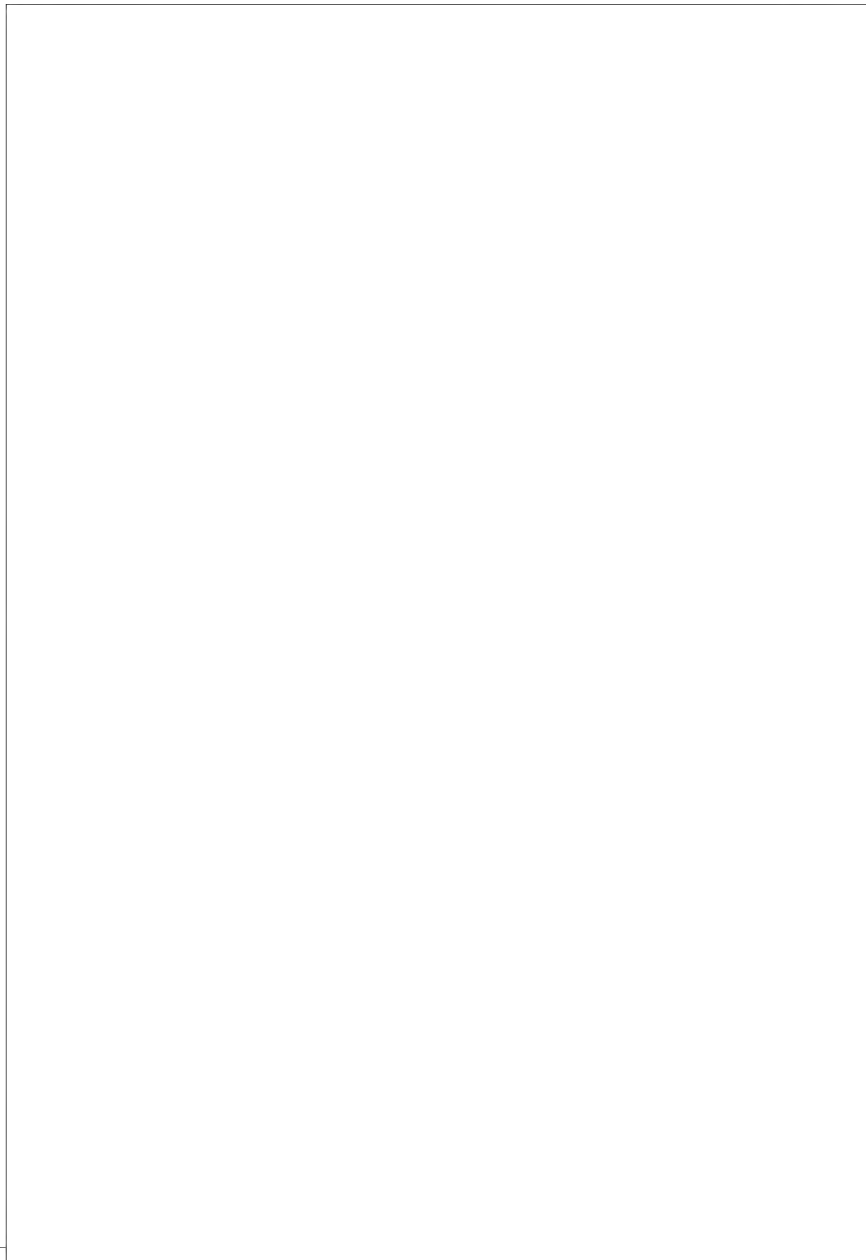
Soviet military movements are continuing in southern East Germany, but no large-scale troop activity has been confirmed. In Poland, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Russian army elements in undetermined numbers have been deployed from the western border of the Soviet Union to the area south of Krakow, not far from the Czech frontier. The Soviets in their news media have still made no mention of activity along the border.

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2. South Vietnam



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3. Soviet Union

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4. Laos

Souvanna is trying to re-establish himself as a neutralist.

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In addition, Souvanna has responded favorably to Tito's invitation to attend a nonaligned nations conference. He has also made a small gesture toward Hanoi. According to preliminary accounts, Souvanna's National Day speech today had a moderate tone and, in sharp contrast to last year's, did not mention North Vietnamese aggression in Laos.

These steps almost certainly reflect the uneasiness in Vientiane over the Paris talks.

5. Cambodia

The army has launched a major campaign against rebellious tribesmen in the northeast. The new offensive is the government's largest effort so far to crush the growing insurgency.

The rebellion stems primarily from Phnom Penh's effort to stop widespread smuggling of food to the Vietnamese Communists and to open tribal lands for development. Tribal resistance has been strong, and army elements have overreacted by burning villages and staging executions.

The insurgents are apparently supported and perhaps directed by Vietnamese Communists.

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6. Communist China

The Cultural Revolution is evidently interfering again with China's military research and development program. The latest evidence is in the form of giant poster attacks in Peking aimed at the chief of China's advanced weapons projects. This man--a vice premier and member of the powerful Military Affairs Committee--is one of Chou En-lai's closest political allies. He is the fourth of Chou's subordinates to come under attack in the last six weeks.

In speeches last winter, Chou deplored the damage caused by factional fighting to the military weapons programs--especially in missiles. We now see that Chou's attempts to insulate these programs from the political fight have failed.

7. Nigeria

Federal and Biafran representatives meeting in London since the beginning of the week have made little or no progress toward setting up substantive negotiations.

8. Cuba

Drought has hit Cuban agriculture for the second year in a row. Sugar cane production is down at least ten percent and food and livestock production is also suffering. Meat, rice, and dairy products are in shortest supply; even bread--which is normally available in adequate quantities--is beginning to appear on the shortage list.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only**

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Soviets Want Contacts: The Soviets are trying to put out more lines to get information on the Paris talks. Wednesday a Soviet diplomat called at the US Embassy, Paris, to suggest informal contacts between Soviet and US representatives in the French capital.

The Russian was clearly fishing for information about the talks, although he charged his proposition off to the need for better relations. He asked about possible expansion of the talks, the role to be played by the French, and plans for press coverage.

Moscow got caught short when Hanoi agreed to talks and, as the Soviets' Asian ally seems less than fully communicative, the Russians hope to buy some insurance. They probably are making similar approaches to the French.

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Hanoi Praises Logistics System: The North Vietnamese are giving extensive publicity to the achievements of their logistics network, doubtless in part to inspire those involved in moving record amounts of men and supplies toward South Vietnam.

In an 8 May domestic broadcast in Vietnamese, Hanoi reported on a recent meeting of logistics personnel held to praise the 1966-67 achievements. The report claimed that communications and transportation workers have defeated both American bombs and natural calamities to insure the uninterrupted flow of materials such as ammunition and medical supplies to troops--especially "those en route to conduct military operations."

Predictably, the broadcast did not come right out and say that a great portion of the transport effort

is in support of Communist forces in South Vietnam. It did, however, single out Front representative Nguyen Van Tien as being present at the congress, along with General Giap.

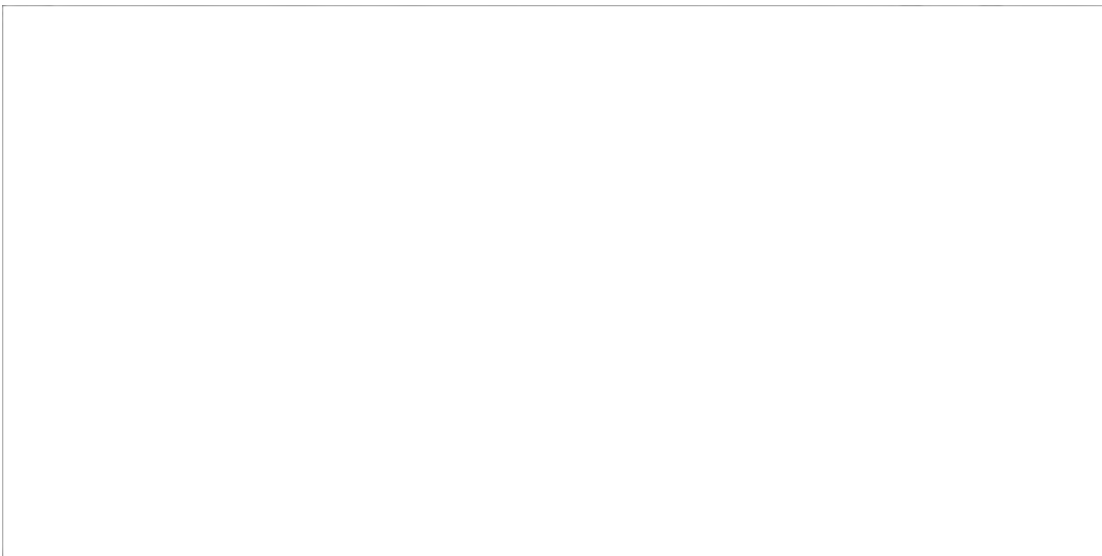
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Life in Hanoi: There is a greater sense of calm among the people of Hanoi since the end to the US bombings [redacted] The cost of living, however, remains high with the rice still rationed and adulterated with flour.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Meeting in Hanoi Praises American Protesters:
Hanoi has publicized a 5 May meeting sponsored by the Fatherland Front--North Vietnam's catch-all mass organization--called to support the "American spring struggle" against the war. According to a 6 May Hanoi Vietnamese domestic broadcast, the meeting was addressed by the minister of culture and other officials involved in the international peace movement. All roundly condemned US involvement in Vietnam while praising the variety of antiwar activities that

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have occurred in American universities and cities over the past several months. The meeting also was attended by Americans Susan Sontag, Robert Greenblatt, and Andrew Kopkind. Greenblatt was quoted welcoming the support and friendship of the North Vietnamese people and praising the resistance of the Vietnamese Communists to allied efforts in Vietnam. The meeting closed unanimously adopting a letter to be sent to Americans "praising their struggle against the war" and thanking them for supporting Hanoi's position.

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Front Also Supports US Antiwar Movement: The Liberation Front has joined in the praise of current unrest in US universities. The Front claims the disturbances manifest the dual struggle of American students against the war in Vietnam and racist segregation. In an 8 May Vietnamese language broadcast, the Front listed the demonstrations that have occurred at Columbia, the University of Chicago, and other institutions and noted that many of the protests were being led by Negroes and other minority groups.

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